


**False Teachers
and
Teaching**

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TEXT—1 John, Chapter 4.

According to the



While the teaching of false doctrine is to characterize the last days, Jesus, Paul, Peter and John constantly teach this truth. The importance of the warning is enhanced when we consider that the state of man is the soul of man.

The church is under obligation to test the teachings and doctrines offered to her, for there always have been, and always will be, men who are desirous to utter any new fancy that seizes them, or to dispute any accepted doctrine of faith which they themselves are not willing to accept. There is no room for compromise, therefore, against a too ready acceptance of any prophet or teacher. Sincerity in a teacher is not sufficient; earnestness and fervor are no guarantee of the truth of the message delivered; perspiration is not sufficient; and it is not a sufficient ground of acceptance of a man to simply say, "He believes what he preaches."

Fortunately, it is possible for the true Christian to make such discernment. Paul, in 1 Peter 2:13-17, in his first epistle, second chapter, clearly state this fact. It may be true that some Christians have the gift of the discernment of spirits in a special way; it is nevertheless true that all Christians may be enabled to discern the falling Holy Spirit, to discern the false from the true.

Not only is such a test possible, but it is obligatory. A careful study of the seven letters in the book of Revelation will show that the apostle John says false teachers "went out from the church, but in these days they "stay in" the church when oftentimes they should be put out. We should be able to detect the presence of those who are in apostate churches who are not compatible to apostate truth we entertain the devil unwares. Yet we must hold the truth in love. There is nothing that will more quickly quench the fire of love on the altar of the heart than heresy.

In the chapter we are considering, the apostle tells us that the point to be proven about teachers is, "Are they of God?" That means from whence is their message derived, from God or from man? The apostle says, "For he that has a church (Rev. 2:9); a ministry (2 Cor. 11:1315); a membership (1 John 3:10); and gives power to work signs (2 Thess. 2:9).

The proof that a man's teaching is from God is shown by his attitude towards Jesus Christ (4:2,5). In all things he must hold to the Head (Col. 4:9). Names and sects and parties fall; Jesus Christ is in all in all. All professing Christians must hold to Jesus Christ in all things and to Jesus Christ as God.

Belief in the incarnation or Virgin birth is a sign that a man's teaching is from God (2:23, 5:1). There must be the belief that the historical Jesus is God. If a man's teaching is not based on this fact of history must be also a fact of faith. There can be no dodging this question: "Jesus is anathema" or else "Jesus is Lord." We may make all the progress in the world, but if we are not able to believe that Jesus is God, we must be careful that our progress is in the truth, and not away from the truth. There is an advance

The next point to be settled with regard to Christ is the acceptance of his Delity (2:18,28; 4:5, 15, 16; 15: 5, 20). True Christian doctrine acknowledges Jesus Christ not merely as Divine, but as Delity, and as the only shipmate of Bethlehem's manhood. He was God manifest in the flesh, in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead. That teaching is false which separates the Christ from Jesus. "This is he that came by water and blood," says John 1:33, "that teaching which states that some form of Delity came on Christ at his baptism and left him at the cross. Jesus Christ cannot be divided; he is the same, yesterday, to-day and forever."

It is not as a teacher from God to be sound with regard to the nature of the redemptive work of Christ. John 3:16 is emphatic about this (compare 3:1,2; 3:5, 4,9,10,14; 5:6). Jesus Christ gave his life as a ransom for our sins; we are reconciled to God by his blood. Jesus Christ is the only one who has the right of propitiation for our sins; he is the Savior of the world. All this means that Jesus Christ took our place and our sins upon himself, that his death was in our stead. It is not enough to say that Jesus Christ died for our moral infidelity upon mankind, or that he was an example of self-sacrificing love, or even that God needed, by such a tragedy, to give the world an illustration of the nature of love.

Christ's death is the supreme manifestation of God's love, and it does show his anger towards sin, but it goes further than that. It has a relation to the sin of man. Christ in his death paid the price of our sins, guilt and redemption: "Who, his own self, bare

our sins in his own body on the tree that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye are healed."

Inspiration Stified.

We are always inspired, but we incessantly stifle the inspiration. God does not cease to speak; but the noise of the creature's willfulness and self-love prevents us from catching up the promptings our hearing. We must silence every creature, including itself that in the deep stillness of the soul we may perceive the ineffable voice—Fenelon.

Preachers for Prisoners.

The day ought not to be long distant when the churches of all denominations will regard the prisoners as a mission to which they have no other attention than support when they are sent longer to place the state in the necessity of paying for the services of chaplains for these institutions—a position Transcendist.

We cannot fall if we live above it.

The brave and cheerful attitude of mind and heart. It alone falls by its

gives up and lies down.